

“Having the Smartest Snacks in Schools”

Smart Snacks Cheat Sheet



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Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act

- Requires that USDA establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold in school.
- Applies to all foods sold:
 - Outside the school meal programs;
 - A la carte in the cafeteria
 - In school stores
 - Snack bars
 - Vending machines
 - Other venues
 - On the school campus; and
 - At any time during the school day



Definitions

The following terms will be used throughout the cheat sheet, so make sure that you and your staff are familiar with their meanings!



Accompaniments

Food items served with another item that also must be included in the nutrient profile. They do not have to be pre-portioned; the SFA may determine the average portion for the nutrient profile. Example accompaniments are salad dressings, butter or jelly on toast, cream cheese on bagels, or garnishes.

Combination Foods

Products that contain two or more components representing two or more of the recommended food groups (fruit, vegetable, dairy product, grains, or protein food). One of the components must be at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable. (Ex: yogurt and cheese, cheese and crackers, hummus and vegetables, etc.)

Competitive Food Item

An item that is available at schools during the school day, but is outside of the NSLP and SBP

Entrée

An item that includes only the following three categories of main dish food items:

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- Combination food of meat/meat alternate and whole grain rich food **OR**
 - Combination food of vegetable or fruit and meat/meat alternate **OR**
 - Meat/meat alternate alone
- *Exceptions of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters, and meat snacks (e.g., dried beef jerky and meat sticks)

At breakfast, the SFA determines which item(s) are the entrée, which can include whole grain rich items and can be exempted from the standards on the day of and the day after meal service (SP 35-2014)

Paired Exemptions

Items that have been designated as exempt from one or more of the nutrient requirements individually and packaged together without any additional ingredients (e.g., peanut butter and celery, reduced fat cheese and apples, etc.)

School Campus

All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day

School Day

The school day is defined by **three** windows:

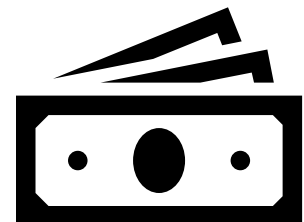
Window 1: from midnight the night before until 30 minutes after the last lunch period. While this window is open, no sale of food or beverage may take place except as part of the school breakfast or school lunch program.

Window 2: opens 30 minutes after the last lunch period ends and closes 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. While this window is open any food that is sold must meet all nutrition standards in the regulations.

Window 3: opens 30 minutes after the end of the official school day and closes at midnight. During this window, there is no nutrient standards restricting what may be sold.

Fundraisers

- All foods that meet the regulatory standards may be sold on the school campus from 30 minutes after lunch until 30 minutes after the school day.
- The standards would not apply to items sold during non-school hours, weekends, or off-campus fundraising events.



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Commonly Asked Questions

Q: If we are selling precooked or bulk items for families to eat at home (such as frozen pizza or cookie dough), do these items still need to meet the standards?

A: No, the sale of frozen pizza, cookie dough, and other items preordered and distributed in a precooked state or in bulk items (multiple servings in a package) for consumption at home is not required to meet the standards.

Q: Can we take fundraising orders at school?

A: Yes, orders may be taken at school if they meet the standards **OR** if the items are not intended to be consumed on school campus during school hours.

Q: Can the delivery of fundraiser items happen during school hours?

A: Yes, foods that have been purchased through a fundraiser may be delivered to the school campus during the day if the foods being sold meet the standards **OR** if they are not intended to be consumed on campus during school hours and as long as the student has permission from the school.

Fundraiser Exemptions

There will be **no** exemptions given for fundraisers. No foods or beverages may be sold on the school campus during the school day that do not meet the standards.

General Standards for Foods

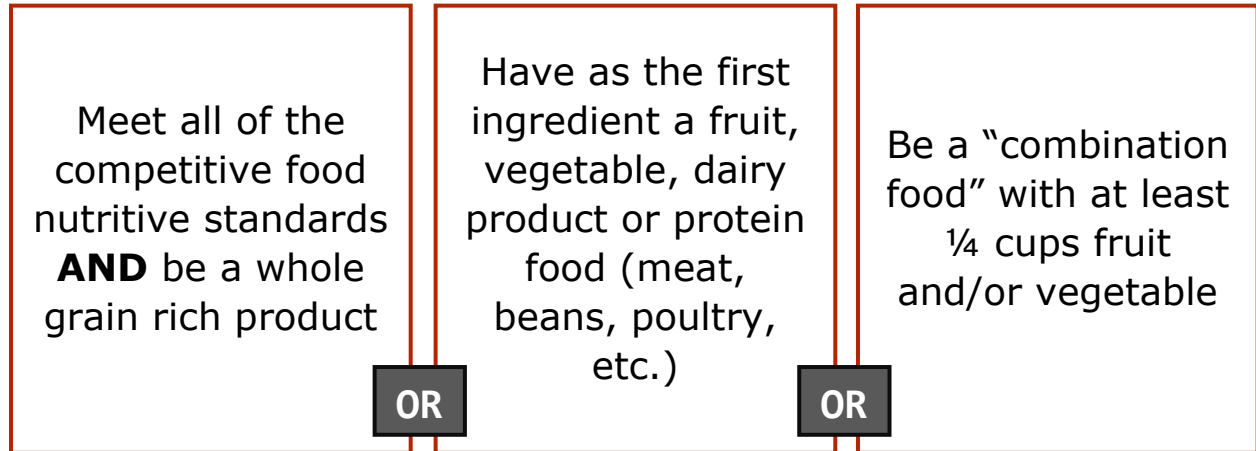
- Applies to all grade levels (K-12)
- Provides exemptions to nutrient standards for specific foods
- Includes general and specific nutrient standards
- Allows broader exemptions for fruits and vegetables, as well as some NSLP and SBP foods



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To be allowable, a competitive food item must:



**If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of the above.*

Whole Grain Rich Products

A whole grain rich product must include 50% or more whole grains by weight **OR** have "whole grain" as the first ingredient

Exemptions from General Nutrition Standards for Foods

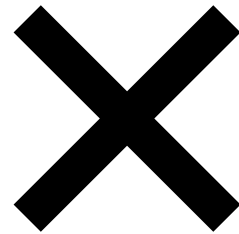
The following items are exempt from meeting all nutrient standards:

NSLP & SBP Entrée Exemptions

This exemption can be used on entrées only. Exemptions may be valid for the day of service and the school day after. These exemptions do not apply to side dishes; side dishes sold as competitive foods must meet all standards.

Fruit & Vegetable Exemptions

- Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients
- Canned fruits with no added ingredients except for water (which are packed in 100% juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup)
- Low sodium/no salt added canned vegetables with no added fats

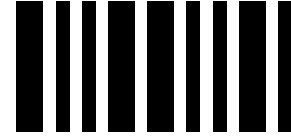


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Specific Nutrient Standards for Foods

The nutrient standards that you must take into account are **total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, calories, and total sugar.**



| Nutrient | Food Item Standard | Exemptions | Combinations & Accompaniments |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| Total Fat | 35% or less of total calories per item as packaged/served | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) • Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts/seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat • Seafood with no added fat • Whole eggs with no added fat | Combination products other than paired exempt food are not exempt and must meet all standards |
| Saturated Fat | 10% or less of total calories per item as packaged/served | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) • Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts/seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat • Whole eggs with no added fat | Combination products other than paired exempt food are not exempt and must meet all standards |
| Trans Fat | 0 g per item as packaged/served | | |

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| | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|
| Sodium | <p>Entrées: 480 mg or less per item as packaged/served</p> <p>Snacks/Side Items: 200 mg or less per item as packaged/served</p> | | Sodium standards include those of any added accompaniment(s) |
| Calories | <p>Entrées: 350 calories or less per item as packaged/served</p> <p>Snacks/Side Items: 200 calories or less per item as packaged/served</p> | | Caloric standards include those of any added accompaniment(s) |
| Total Sugars | 35% or less of weight per item as packaged/served | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried whole fruits or vegetables; dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces; and dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added sweeteners • Dried whole fruits, or pieces, with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes (e.g., cranberries, tart cherries or blueberries) • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweetener | |

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Nutrition Standards for Beverages

The standards for beverages will vary by grade level and identify specific types of beverages that are allowed and the allowable container sizes.

The allowable beverages for all grade levels are **water**, **milk**, and **juice**.



Elementary School Beverage Options

Water: No size limit

Plain, non-caloric, noncarbonated

Milk: 8 oz or less

Low-fat or non-fat, flavored or unflavored

Juice: 8 oz or less

100% fruit or vegetable juice or any combination of both totaling 100% with no added sweeteners

No other beverages are allowed, and all must be caffeine free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.

Middle School Beverage Options

Water: No size limit

Plain, non-caloric, noncarbonated

Milk: 12 oz or less

Low-fat or non-fat, flavored or unflavored

Juice: 12 oz or less

100% fruit or vegetable juice or any combination of both totaling 100% with no added sweeteners

No other beverages are allowed, and all must be caffeine free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.

High School Beverage Options

At this grade level, beverages may contain caffeine.

Water: No size limit

Plain, non-caloric, noncarbonated

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Milk: 12 oz or less

Low-fat or non-fat, flavored or unflavored

Juice: 12 oz or less

100% fruit or vegetable juice or any combination of both totaling 100% with no added sweeteners

Flavored or Non-Flavored Calorie-Free Beverages: 20 oz or less

- Must contain 5 calories or less per 8 oz, or 10 calories or less per 20 oz
- Cannot contain more than 10 grams of sugar per serving

Flavored or Non-Flavored Low-Calorie Beverages: 12 oz or less

- Must contain 40 calories or less per 8 oz, or 60 calories or less per 12 oz
- Cannot contain more than 10 grams of sugar per serving

Best Practices for the Administrative Review

Recordkeeping

LEAs and SFAs should maintain records for competitive food items sold under the nonprofit food service account and any other competitive food sales, such as:

- Receipts of purchases and deliveries
- Nutrition labels
- Product specifications



Product Accuracy

Product Delivery & Verification

Staff should verify all products upon delivery. If a non-compliant product is substituted, you will need to contact your vendor to have this issue corrected.

Periodic Verification

You should periodically check that your products' formulations have not changed and that they are still in compliance with Smart Snack standards. This should be done at least at the start of each school year.

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Off-Site Review Tool Tips

In the 1100 question set for the off-site review, there are four subset questions that pertain to Smart Snacks in the school meals programs.

1100: What are the SFA's food sale policies? List all types of food/beverage sales to include the selling of non-food items in combination with food items.

Tool Tip: Describe or attach your district's food sale policies

- For example, the regulation of the sale of competitive foods or beverages sold to students during the school day, timeframes in which competitive foods can be sold, fundraising activities, policies that are included in the district's local wellness policy as it relates to food/beverage sales, etc.

1101: What is the SFA's process for determining compliance with non-packaged or recipe food items (combination foods that do not have a label)?

Tool Tip: Describe or attach your process for determining compliance for non-packaged or recipe food items

- How do you ensure that your recipe food items (e.g., mashed potatoes/French fries) meet Smart Snack standards?
- What tools do you use to make this determination?

1102: How does the SFA account for accompaniments when determining whether food items meet the Smart Snack standards?

Tool Tip: Describe or attach the process in place to determine the portion sizes (or average portion sizes) and associated nutrients (calories, fat, sodium, sugar) of accompaniments (e.g., ranch) sold.

- Remember SFAs cannot sell accompaniments on their own (e.g., a side of ranch) unless they meet the Smart Snack standards.
- For example, if you sell celery sticks with the accompaniment ranch a la carte,
 - How would you determine if Smart Snack standards are met?
 - What tools do you use to make this determination?

1103: Who is responsible for tracking Smart Snacks compliance at the SFA?

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Tool Tip: The LEA and SFA should communicate with those who are responsible for tracking Smart Snacks compliance as there are many opportunities for this to occur outside of the food service department (e.g., school stores, vending machines, student-run fundraisers, etc.). Food service directors are not responsible for Smart Snack compliance outside of food service

- **SFA Level:** List the administrator or other non-food service employee responsible for Smart Snack compliance for district related activities (e.g., Superintendent or another designee)
- **School Level:** List the administrator or other non-food service employee responsible for Smart Snack compliance in the school building (e.g., Principal)
- **Food service:** List the food service employee(s) responsible for Smart Snack compliance in the district and school building (e.g., Director/Manager)

Other Considerations

Culinary Education Programs

Nutrition standards apply to all foods sold to students on the school campus during the school day, including food prepared and/or sold by culinary education programs (SP 40-2014)

Transition of Food & Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value to Smart Snack in School Standards

All Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value exemptions ended on June 30, 2014. Any competitive foods and beverages must meet Smart Snack standards (SP 53-2014)

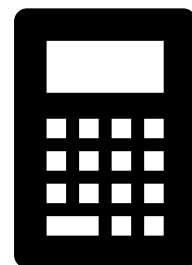
Alliance for A Healthier Generation Smart Snack Product Calculator

To verify that your products meet the Smart Snacks nutritional standards, use this tool:

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>.

Keep the following in mind as well:



- Hover over the blue “i” for assistance



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- When entering product information into the calculator, be sure to enter information as the product is **sold** (or the sum of all components and accompaniments).



Product Information

Take the guess work out of your day! Answer a series of questions to see if your product meets the [USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards](#)*. Then save and print for your records!

*Results from this calculator have been determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be accurate in assessing product compliance with the Federal requirements for Smart Snacks in Schools provided the information is not misrepresented when entered into the Calculator.

CHECK OUT THE BLUE INFORMATION BUBBLES FOR ASSISTANCE! If unable to view, please update your browser or try a different browser. Please refer to [USDA's Q&A document](#) for additional guidance on specific products.

Enter product information as SOLD (as portioned and eaten, such as a beef patty on a bun with accompaniments).

NOTE: As of July 1, 2016, %DV is no longer a qualifying standard for compliance.

My Product is a ...

a) **Snack** ⓘ

b) **Side** ⓘ

c) **Entree** ⓘ

d) **Beverage** ⓘ

START OVER **NEXT STEP**

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Q: "My Product Is A..."

Snack:

Include products such as chips, popcorn, nuts, snack-type bars (i.e. cereal, granola and fruit and nut bars), ice cream and sometimes frozen fruit, including frozen juice (see USDA's Q&A document for guidance). Does NOT include dairy drinks or dairy beverages such as drinkable yogurt or milk shakes, which do not meet the criteria for being measured against the food nutrient standards.

Side:

A product that is sold in addition to an entrée at a meal, such as rice, steamed vegetables, mashed potatoes or French fries.

Entrée:

The main course of a meal that contains (1) A combination food of meat or meat alternate and whole grain-rich food; or (2) A combination food of vegetable or fruit and meat or meat alternate; or (3) A meat or meat alternate alone with the exception of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters and meat snacks.

Beverage:

Includes dairy beverages or dairy drinks (such as drinkable yogurt, milk shakes and protein shakes) or coffee drinks (such as cappuccinos, mochas, or lattes).

Q: "Is the first ingredient* of your product a..."

Fruit:

If the first ingredient of your product is a fruit concentrate, concentrated juice, or concentrated puree, choose "None of the above" because these are considered added sugars.

Products pairing two items with exemptions are exempt from certain nutrient standards. For example:

- If the product is a fruit/vegetable with an exemption and is paired with a Protein Food (such as a nut, seed, nut or seed butter, fish or other seafood), please choose "Protein Food" and follow the prompts accordingly.
- If the product is a fruit/vegetable with an exemption and is paired with reduced fat cheese, please choose "Dairy" and follow the prompts accordingly.

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Vegetable:

If the first ingredient of your vegetable product is potato flakes or dehydrated potato, choose "vegetable".

Products pairing two items with exemptions are exempt from certain nutrient standards. For example:

- If the product is a fruit/vegetable with an exemption and is paired with a "Protein Food" (such as a nut, seed, nut or seed butter, fish or other seafood), please choose "Protein Food" and follow the prompts accordingly.
- If the product is a fruit/vegetable with an exemption and is paired with reduced fat cheese, please choose "Dairy" and follow the prompts accordingly.

Dairy:

This category includes ingredients such as milk, yogurt and cheese. It does not include dairy beverages or dairy drinks (such as drinkable yogurt, milk shakes and protein shakes) or coffee drinks (such as cappuccinos, mochas, or lattes).

Protein Food:

Includes products such as lean red meat, skinless poultry, lean deli meats, fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, nut butters or seed butters, cooked dry beans or peas, soy products (such as tempeh and tofu), and more.

Whole Grain:

Remember, acceptable grain products must contain 50% or more whole grains by weight or have a whole grain as the first ingredient.

- **Note:** products such as corn tortilla chips or corn tortillas may be considered whole grains. For corn products, please follow USDA FNS guidance.

*Refer to the label's ingredient statement to answer this. If the first ingredient is water, then choose the second ingredient from the above options.

At the end of every calculation, it will tell you if your product is compliant or not.

✓ Smart Snack Compliant Products

The calculator will generate a nutrition label for this specific product to be printed and retained for your records.

Brand: Insert the brand of the product

Product: Insert the name of the product

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Serving Size: This is pre-filled based on the information put into the calculator

First Ingredient: Insert the first ingredient of the product

Click "[Print for Your Records](#)" to print the label and product information for your records. View the example below:

Smart Snacks Product Calculator Results

Brand:
Brand Name

Product Name:
Product Name

Serving Size:
24.81 g

First Ingredient:
First Ingredient

Your vegetable product meets all nutrient standards for entrees or snack foods.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 0.875 oz (about 24.81 g) ⓘ
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories 110

Total Fat (g) 3

Saturated Fat (g) 0

Trans Fat (g) 0

Sodium (mg) 140

Carbohydrates

Total Sugars (g) 2

Vitamin D (%) NA Potassium (%) NA
Calcium (%) NA Dietary Fiber (%) NA

✗ Not a Smart Snack Compliant Product

The reason(s) why your product was not compliant will appear at the top of the screen. The calculator will still generate a report for this specific product to be printed and retained for your records if you wish to save it for future reference when menu planning. If you wish to continue, enter the below information:

Brand: Insert the brand of the product

Product: Insert the name of the product

Click "[Print for Your Records](#)" to print the product information.

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Want to Practice with the Smart Snack Product Calculator?

View the “Smart Snack or Nah” Worksheets document to see example products that you can practice inserting into the tool.

Smart Snack Product Calculator:

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>